

Wm. Miller

THE
Religious Monitor,
OR
EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY.

DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION, AS SET
FORTH IN THE FORMULARIES OF THE WESTMINSTER
DIVINES, AND OF THE CHURCHES IN HOLLAND.

No. 12.

MAY, 1837.

Vol. III.

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Hold fast the form of sound words.

For there are certain men *crept in unawares*, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, *even our Lord Jesus Christ.*

II. TIM. I. 13.

Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

JER. 6. 16.

JER. VI. 16.

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THE
Religious Monitor,
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No. 12.

MAY, 1827.

VOL. III.

Original Communications.

For the Religious Monitor.

ON REGENERATION.

(Concluded from page 514.)

Having attempted a review of the Dr's. language, on this subject, we shall now attend to the subject by itself; and we assert,

1. That it is a sentiment unauthorized by the scriptures, which declare, that we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God,"—and that—"of his own will, begat he us, by the word of truth,"—passages which can have no meaning, but by applying them to regeneration, properly so called, or the new birth;—which call the gospel "the power of God unto salvation," because it begins the work, as well as promotes the work begun, under the direction of the Spirit of God;—which call it "the rod of Christ's strength," by which he makes a willing people come to him, in the day of his power;—which call the word, "the ingrafted word of God, which is able to save the soul;" for this reason, that as a good and fruitful graft, united to a tree of a different quality, produces a change in the fruit it bears, so the Spirit by the word, as virtually united to the soul, produces a change upon it, which is followed with much good fruit. They also call the word, "the sword of the Spirit," by which he overcomes the enmity of the heart, when he implants the gracious principle which is put into it, in regeneration, and assert, that the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God for pulling down strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of Christ in the heart; which weapons, are the word of the law and gospel, in the hand of the Spirit, wielded by a gospel ministry, and made the means, instrumentally, of all that the Spirit does in regeneration.

And, to set forth the nature of the Spirit's work in regeneration, it is compared to the casting of the metal into the mould, which comes out in the exact form or shape of the mould into which it is cast, as in Rom. vi. 17.—“Ye have obeyed from the heart, that form of doctrine which was delivered you,” or as it has been, and may with propriety be, rendered, “the mould of the doctrine into which ye were delivered;” intimating, that the obedience the believer gives to the word, as the rule of his good conversation in the world, is the fruit of the Spirit's work upon the heart, changing the man into its own image, or making him a living copy of itself, which is done in regeneration. It is also set forth to us, as “a writing of the law in the heart,” as in Jer. xxxi. 33. so as that the believer becomes, by regenerating grace, a counterpart of the written word, and has that done by the Spirit's bringing home the word with power, for that purpose. And in 2 Cor. iii. 18. we are said, “beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, to be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” By that very word, by which sanctification is carried on, regeneration is effected; for we are changed into the same image, in every measure or degree of that image within us, by this sight of the glory of the Lord, through this glass. I know that it will be said, by those who are favourable to the Dr's. sentiments on this subject, that the passages alluded to, refer to the Spirit's work in sanctification only, and not at all to his work in regenerating the heart of the sinner.—But how can regeneration and sanctification be distinguished, either as to the worker or the instrument by which they are wrought, since they are the same work, in only two distinct considerations of it, as begun and as advancing in the believer? Regeneration, is sanctification begun, and as really is the image of Christ, in the regenerated soul, in the first stages of a divine work, as after it has for years been progressing in the person. It is an outline, if we may so speak, of the divine image drawn upon the soul, which a subsequent work of sanctification is filling up. And who, then, shall say, this being the case, that the passages referred to, do not apply to regeneration, as well as to after sanctification? But this, we hope, we have sufficiently answered, in our review of the Dr's. language, on this subject.

2. It is a sentiment disavowed by the Reformed churches in general, and by all approved writers. By our public standards, in particular, it is declared, that regeneration is effected by the Spirit and word together, so as that the Spirit acts not, in producing the change which is effected in regeneration, but by the word in those who are capable of being outwardly called by the gos-

pel: as in the Westminster Confession of Faith, under the chapter on effectual calling. "All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call by his *word* and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation in Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their hearts of stone and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills and, by his almighty power, determining them to that which is good; effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet, so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace:" with which, agree the Reformed churches in general, on this subject. And in the Larger Catechism, answer to question 67, it is declared, that "effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace, whereby he doth, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by *his word* and Spirit, savingly enlightening their minds, *renewing* and powerfully determining their wills, so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able, freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein." Also, in our Shorter Catechism, in answer to the question, "What is effectual calling?" we are told, "Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit whereby, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered unto us in the gospel." It embraces, according to that Catechism, the illumination of the mind and renovation of the will, and the word being the instrument of the mind's illumination, must be also the instrument of the will's renovation; and in short, of that change which wholly passed upon the soul, in regeneration. The Associate Reformed church, by her Constitution of Principles, is the same insentiment with the Westminster Confession, on this subject. The Reformed Presbyterian church seems also to be of the same mind, as under the article on regeneration, she declares, that "the holy Spirit (in this work) applies the benefits of redemption to all the elect of God, renewing the soul after the image of God, enlightening the understanding and directing the affections of the heart to God in Christ Jesus;" which implies more than a simple principle implanted, to prepare for receiving and obeying the word; namely, an illumination of the understanding and a direction of the affections to Christ, through the word discovering him as an object amiable and worthy of the affections being placed on him. And in the Testimony of the Associate church, under the article, "Of the work of

the holy Spirit," after describing his work in regeneration, it is added, "the Spirit of God works by the word," &c. And while they testify, in that instrument, against those on the one hand, who, pretending to hold by the word, ridicule the work of the Spirit in opening and applying it to hearers of the gospel; and on the other hand, against those, who, under pretence of magnifying the work of the Spirit, despise and neglect the word, by which he works, in *renewing* and calling sinners, and in preparing them for the inheritance of the saints in light.

A great variety of writers of note might be referred to, as speaking the same language, with these public formularies, on this subject. But we shall satisfy ourselves, that we do not swell this paper too much, with extracts from a very few of them.—Owen, in his Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Williams' Abridgment) says, that "in the regeneration and sanctification of the elect, the first external act of their salvation, is wrought by the word. It is true, (he adds,) it doth not this by any power resident in itself, and always necessarily accompanying its administration; for then, all would be regenerated to whom it is preached, and there would be no neglectors of it.—But it is the distinguished *instrument* of God for this end; and, in that respect, is mighty and powerful. By the gospel and its promises, as the most exalted instruments or means, are believers actually and really made partakers of the Spirit, as to his gifts and graces, his indwelling, presence and abode. Gospel promises, are (*vehicula Spiritus*) the chariots that bring his holy Spirit to our souls." Boston, on this subject, in his Fourfold State, says, "the word, by which the gospel is preached unto you, impregnated by the Spirit of God, is the means of regeneration, and by it, are dead sinners raised to life." And again, addressing the unregenerated, he says, "the word is the seed, whereof the new creature is formed, therefore, take heed to it and entertain it, for it is your life." Witsius defines regeneration to be, "that supernatural act of God, whereby, a new, a divine life, is infused into the elect person spiritually dead, and that *from* the incorruptible seed of the word, made fruitful by the infinite power of the Spirit." Beza, Turretine, Marck, and other systematical divines; with Hallyburton, Brown, Marshall, Kollock, and other practical writers, all express themselves in a similar manner. So that the sentiment in question has a vast majority of sound writers against it.

3. It is in flat contradiction to God's established way of working, which is by means. For do we take a view of his working in the creation of the world, which was the beginning of the

works of God, we find that he did not, by a mere energy of his power, bring created existence into being, out of nothing; but he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it arose into being from its primitive nothing: and in bringing creation work into its perfection, six days were employed, and every day had its own particular work, which was done upon it; and that was done, not simply by God's putting forth his almighty power in the production of these respective parts of creation work, but there was a "Let it be," used in respect to every part of that work—"Let there be light"—"Let there be a firmament," &c. In the making of Adam and Eve means also were used, for he made Adam out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul; and Eve was formed from a rib taken from Adam's side. General providence, is just his keeping the world in being, and ordering and governing all things both in the natural and moral world, by a connected chain of causes and effects: And in the kingdom of grace, means are represented as generally used in carrying on the grand purposes of his love and mercy, both in the church generally and in believers individually; as his providence placing those whom he intends to call effectually by his grace, where the gospel is enjoyed, or sending it to them and exciting them to thoughtfulness about their privileges and opportunities; and his ordinances calling in and building up. Does God in the use of means, work conviction in the heart of the sinner, build up his people in comfort, establish and strengthen them, seal his covenant blessings over unto them, and give them a communion with himself, as he does in all the ordinances of his grace in this world. And shall he in regeneration alone, or the implantation of the principle of faith, and every other grace, work without them? We had need to have something more than bare conjecture, as the reason why we should make an exception of regeneration, especially when we consider that scripture speaks so often in language that seems to teach us the instrumentality of the word in this work. We say that to assert that regeneration is accomplished without means, would make it altogether an anomaly in the works and ways of God. For though the Westminster divines say, under the article "Of God's works in providence," that "he sometimes works in providence without, above, and against means," this only respects particular cases, in which he sometimes steps out of his usual way of working, and is not to be understood of his working in any one way generally, in providence, without means. So in regeneration: though he also makes use of means ordinarily, he sometimes, as respects indi-

vidual persons, works without them, as in the conversion of Paul, the thief on the cross, with some others; or rather, perhaps, though he still makes use of the word in the regeneration of persons capable of being outwardly called, he does not use it upon all in the same way. For it will be hard to prove that the word was not used as the instrument in Paul's conversion, as the words of the voice he heard from heaven were nothing else than the word of God to him, though they did not at that time form a part of the written book of the scriptures. Besides, Paul had a knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures, and like the rest of the unbelieving Jews in his time, expected a Messias to come at some period or another, though he did not believe that he was actually come, until he heard that voice from heaven, which we may presume produced conviction in the mind of Paul, by discovering that the same Jesus who spake to him, was the Messias of the scriptures already come. Nor is there evidence wanting of the instrumentality of the word in producing the change effected upon the thief while hanging upon the cross, since we know that Christ declared himself, both when upon the cross in the hearing of both the thieves, and on his way to it, so as that they both had an opportunity of knowing who he was; and in the case of the convicted thief, the declaration Christ gave of himself, accompanied with the power and blessing of the Spirit, answered the same end to him which a gospel sermon, preached by his ambassadors called and employed by him, has done to others, with the blessing of God attending it. The Spirit, we have reason to believe, wrought, even with him, by means of the word, but not in the ordinary way.

4. It is not simply a physical, but a moral change, which takes place in regeneration, and must be considered as having moral means to produce it. The sinner in his unregenerated state, is not only without an ability to serve God, but he is under an enmity, which renders him unwilling for his service, and that enmity has to be overcome, in order that he may go on in it with freedom and delight. But how does the Holy Spirit overcome this enmity? It is by a satisfying discovery he gives of God, as a God reconciled, in the Lord Jesus Christ, with the sinner, so as that he may know that there is mercy with God for him, notwithstanding his sin and guilt, and be induced from that discovery he obtains of God, to love and obey him. Because a view of God, only as offended, without a discovery of his mercy manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ, would keep the soul for ever chained down under the power of that enmity. And that the Spirit works in this two-fold manner, in regenerating the sinner,

appears from this circumstance, that we find these two so often represented in scripture as uniformly accompanying each other in this work, the power of God put forth, and motives engaging the heart, as in the 110th Psalm, verses 2, 3—"The Lord shall send the rod of his strength out of Zion"—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power:" and Songs of Solomon, i. 4—"Draw me, we will run after thee:" and iv. 16—and in Hosea xi. 3. where God says of Ephraim, "I drew them with cords of a man and with bands of love." Should it be asserted, that in these and similar passages, there is a respect to the way in which the Spirit works in sanctification, rather than in regeneration, we affirm that they are equally as positive proof for the mode of the Spirit's dealing with the sinner in his regeneration, as with the believer in his progressive sanctification; because they set forth the way by which any good can ever be found in us, either in the principle, or exercise of that principle. And the very first passage shows that this is the case, as the declaration, that the Lord shall send the rod of Christ's strength out of Zion, is accompanied with the declaration, that he shall rule in the midst of his enemies, as overcoming their enmity, by implanting his grace in the heart, and in this manner, in the day of his power, making a willing people for himself. The words in the 45th Psalm, 3d verse, are also much to our purpose, as they show, not only the instrumentality the word has in this work, but the situation and character of those upon whom God bestows his saving grace, before he implants the principle in them in regeneration: and upon any other view of regeneration than the one we defend, they would be an absolute untruth. They cannot refer to that conviction unregenerated persons may have produced in their minds while they still remain enemies to Christ, for it is a conviction, the words in the Psalm speak of, which brings them to submission to Christ, or falling under him. Nor can they refer to that conviction which may be the fruit of regeneration, and follows it, because regenerated persons cannot be classed among Christ's enemies, if the change which is produced in regeneration is a saving change. It follows therefore, that they must be understood of that conviction which takes place in regeneration itself, which, from being enemies, makes them friends of Christ, and is accomplished by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And many other passages might be referred to which prove that the Spirit uses the word in regeneration as a moral instrument, by which he operates upon the sinner. But,

5. It is a sentiment, which giving it its full sway, would land those who maintain it into every absurdity. It savours greatly

of a spirit of enthusiasm, and has given birth to most of the enthusiastic notions so prevalent in our times. That God may, and often does communicate himself, as really now, by dreams and visions, and particular revelations of the Spirit, as before the canon of scripture was completed; and that the Spirit, by suggestions borne in upon the mind, either without the word, or by the word, presented in an adaptation to the person's case, as what he may take comfort from, otherwise than by acting faith upon it, as God's word brought to his remembrance by the Spirit, which was promised to be given for this end, is considered by all sound casuistical divines to be nothing else than enthusiasm. Because the Spirit, in all his saving operations upon the soul, generally uses the instrumentality of the word, and brings the soul to act upon it, as it lays a ground for faith. And it is no less so, to believe that the Spirit, in this work, operates without the word.—It is nothing else than the doctrine of the Quakers, concerning a light within, which directs and regenerates them, without the written word at all as an instrument. It has an affinity to that doctrine which teaches to look for something in ourselves, before actual believing in Christ, as actually necessary in order to our finding acceptance with God. It is contrary to what the gospel declares as to the character in which we are to come to Christ, namely, as sinners who have no ability, to him, as, through the promise, offering faith and every other grace, for our receiving him rightly. If there is a work of God, preparing persons immediately for receiving Christ without the word, or otherwise than through the word, we would be coming to Christ in the first act of genuine faith, not as sinners, but as persons qualified and prepared for receiving him; and the first enquiry of a hearer of the gospel, before he attempts to embrace the promise, or consider that it belongs at all to him, should be—Have I received these qualifications, or not? It lays a ground for actual discouragement, where there is no certainty that they are really possessed of these qualifications to believing; because the promise will not be of avail to any, and has not respect to any upon this principle, until they obtain these qualifications. And it supposes the preaching of the gospel to have no respect to sinners, but to actually regenerated persons; because if it is not the usual instrument by which the Spirit works in regeneration, of what use is it to preach it to sinners at all? If it is only an instrument in our sanctification, after regeneration work is effected, all the design of providence in sending it where unregenerated sinners are, as respects them, can only be, that it may be ready, as an instrument in their sanctification, after regeneration has actually

taken place. If it shall be asserted, that it is not without, but in the presence of the word, that regeneration takes place in adults, of what use, we may say, is the presence of the word, if not by its instrumentality? Deny its instrumentality in regeneration, and we may expect conversion work to be effected, when the proper time comes, as readily in the ball-room as under the preaching of the gospel; because God is no otherwise present in the one place more than in the other, unless by his ordinances, as the means of his own appointment, for converting and regenerating sinners, and building up his people, and giving them a communion with himself. It is in fact an Hopkinsian sentiment, as regeneration, according to the Hopkinsian, is effected, not through any instrumental agency by which God may be pleased to act, but, through the physical agency of God's operation on the faculty of the will, without any means of grace. (See Dr. Ely's Contrast, and his Theological Review, extracts from which are inserted in the number of the Religious Monitor for July, 1825.) With this difference perhaps, that the Hopkinsian admits a change of the will and dispositions to be given, without the principle, or resolves it into a mere moral exercise; whereas the other understands that change as a change in regard of the principle, without the disposition, which is supposed to come after.—By both, however, it is without the instrumentality of means.

We shall close this paper with mentioning two objections which may be brought forward against all we have said on the subject, and giving a reply to them; the rest of the objections, of any seeming consequence, having been already attended to in our review of the Dr's. own arguments.

The first is—that some infants are regenerated before they actually believe; and is not this a proof that the Spirit does not always act in regeneration by the instrumentality of the word, and acts in this work, as respects the implantation of the principle of grace, without the word? To which we reply, that as the Lord's manner of dealing with those infants, which are the subjects of saving grace, is among the secret things which belong to himself; it cannot be a rule by which we are to judge in the case of capable subjects of actual faith, more especially when we find it declared so plainly in scripture, that it is by the instrumentality of the word he both regenerates and sanctifies the latter. Regenerated infants are subjects also of justification, though they are not capable of the actual exercise of faith in Christ, through the word exhibiting Christ to us as the Lord our righteousness; and we do not see how their being the subjects of regeneration, without the instrumentality of the word, could prove

that regeneration in adults is accomplished without it; more than their being justified, would prove that adults may be, and are justified persons in the sight of God, all such as are actually justified, without a receiving of Christ as the Lord their righteousness.

The second objection is—that regeneration is an instantaneous work, or rather act of God; but to suppose it to be accomplished by the word, as the means or instrument, would make it to be the result of a process of reasoning in the mind of the regenerated person, and of a process of exercise upon the word, which could not comport with its being an instantaneous act. Supposing the word to be the instrument, it can only be so by a discovery both of the person himself, and of Christ the proper object of faith therein, in order that it may be operative in producing this change, if its instrumentality is at all to be admitted in the first work of regeneration. But it may be replied, that that discovery becomes a saving discovery, only when the person sees the excellence and suitableness of Christ, the glorious object of faith, his own welcome, with the hearty approbation of the object, and appropriation of him, which is faith, or a believing sight, because it is a sight of Christ in the way of applying the revelation which is made of him in the gospel, to his own particular case; while all that is short of this is no more than what the natural man, by a natural and common work of the Spirit may attain. And, it is so much instantaneous, as that there is no intermediate condition between this saving sight of Christ, and what may be the mere fruit of a common operation of the Spirit. But, the moment he obtains it, the change passes upon him, and the word, in the hand of the Spirit, is the instrument. Y.

OBSERVATIONS ON A PAMPHLET ENTITLED, THE DOCTRINE OF INCEST STATED, &c.

To the Editor of the Religious Monitor,

SIR,

I take the liberty to send you a few observations on a pamphlet entitled, *The doctrine of Incest stated*, with an examination of the question, *Whether a man may marry his deceased wife's sister?* in a letter to a clergyman of the Presbyterian church, by Domesticus. By giving them a corner in your Magazine you will much oblige your humble servant. A. H.

The subject of the above mentioned pamphlet is a question of great importance to society, and in present circumstances demands and deserves the serious attention of every friend of pure

religion and sound morality; and from this consideration alone I have been induced to send you the few following remarks. The question, whether a man may marry his deceased wife's sister, has been repeatedly under discussion in the supreme judicatories of the Presbyterian and Reformed Dutch Churches, but hitherto neither of these venerable bodies have come to any decision on the subject, although, I believe the practice referred to is contrary to the Confessions of both. The question must therefore be considered as decided already in the negative by both of them, at least till some alteration be made in their Confessions of Faith. This accordingly is the view taken of this subject by the Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the case of M'Crimmon. It appears that Mr. M'Crimmon appealed from the decision of the Presbytery of Fayetteville, confirming his suspension from the communion of the church, for having married his deceased wife's sister. The committee to which the case was referred reported, that in their opinion no relief could be given to Mr. M'Crimmon without an alteration of the Confession of Faith, xxiv. 4, in which it is said, "the man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood, than he may of his own; nor the woman of her husband's kindred nearer in blood than of her own." At the same time, as there is a diversity of opinion and practice on this subject, the committee submitted the following resolution, viz:

That the Presbyteries be, and they hereby are directed to take this matter into serious consideration, and send up in writing to the next General Assembly, an answer to the question, Whether the above quoted clause of our Confession shall be erased?

This report was adopted, and the resolution agreed to. It may therefore be expected that the question, Whether the Presbyterian Church will prohibit or allow such marriages in future? will be finally decided at the next meeting of the General Assembly. The publication of this pamphlet may therefore be considered as exceedingly well-timed, and if I mistake not it will go far to convince those who have hitherto been undecided, that there may be much danger in erasing this clause from the Confession of Faith.

The pamphlet is in the form of a letter to a clergyman. It is written with great ability, and it is pleasing to see so much force put forth, and so much interest given to a subject which many were disposed to look upon as already threadbare from frequent discussion. The author begins by stating that his conviction of the incestuous nature of the marriage of a wife's sister is not founded on the letter of the Levitical law. "I look," says he,

"at the reason of that code and at the reason of every law of incest, that answers the design of its institution." He further gives it as his opinion, that all the difficulty and obscurity complained of in this inquiry, proceed from taking hold of it by the "wrong end," and then he proposes that the question should be tried by the rule of general expediency, as apprehended by the common sense of mankind. After treating at some length of the obligations of the Levitical institutions, and stating and exploding several opinions respecting the reason of the law of incest, he states what he thinks is the true reason, in the following words: "The law of incest is the great moral safeguard appointed by providence for protecting the laws of marriage and chastity; without which the best organized society that the earth has ever seen upon its surface, would become in a few years a hideous mass of corruption and rottenness." "It is an expedient for guarding against a species of criminality which would destroy society in its fountains, and a criminality, at the same time, which, supposing the expedient not to be employed, would be perpetrated every day and hour in almost every house and hovel in our land."

The author next proceeds to show the necessity of this safeguard around the purity of domestic society, and to describe the security enjoyed under its influence. This may be regarded as a very important part of the work, and in the execution of it much energy of mind and acuteness of feeling is displayed. The security enjoyed under the influence of the law of incest, is spoken of in the following terms: "Hence it is, the father of a family can lie down comfortably on his bed; he can sleep tranquilly all night; and meet his children in the morning without a shade of suspicion crossing his brow. He may leave his home for weeks, and months, and return again,—confident that all is right in his humble dwelling. He knows that there is a spirit from the seventh heavens residing beneath his roof, watching over each of his beloved charge, breathing around a pure and holy atmosphere, in which a vicious thought cannot live a moment, and where all the virtues love to dwell. His notions concerning this heavenly agent are perhaps exceedingly indefinite and obscure: Like the spirit in Job, he cannot discern the form thereof, nor has he seen its face. But it is the law of incest." p. 18.

In regard to the application of the law, and the particular cases to which it applies, the following rule is proposed: "The law being intended to guard against the dangers threatening domestic purity from constant, unrestricted intercourse; wherever such intercourse may, in consequence of the habits and manners of a

people, be presumed to exist, there, no matter what be or be not the degree of consanguinity and affinity, the law should take effect; marriage is prohibited." The letter is concluded, by showing that this principle is adopted in the codes of different nations on this subject; and that, according to it, the marriage of a deceased wife's sister, is among us prohibited as incestuous; and finally, the arguments usually advanced by the friends of such marriages are considered, and successfully refuted.

In remarking on this production, I cannot help admiring the ability of the author, and the strength of mind displayed by him in discussing the subject on which he has undertaken to write.—Like other human productions, however, it is not perfect; and, if I mistake not, there are some sentiments in it of a hurtful tendency. I will now therefore take the liberty to point out some defects, which I have observed with pain in the work of so able an author. And, first, there is a concession made in this letter to the advocates of that kind of connection, against which he so ably argues, which was totally uncalled for, and which certainly adds nothing to the force of his confessedly strong arguments. For my own part, I readily admit, that I perceive great force and beauty in the method of reasoning adopted by the writer of this letter; and yet I am not prepared to give up with the direct argument, or rather law, derived from the word of God.—In the 18th chapter of Leviticus, about which so much has been said, it is expressly enjoined—"None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him." And the construction of the Westminster divines, that where marriage is forbidden on the one side, the prohibition on the other is implied, has never been proved to be unfair. This, I think, should have been at least attempted by our author before he ventured on so sweeping a declaration as the following: "I can no more find it (viz. the incestuous marriage of a wife's sister) prohibited in the words of that code, (the Levitical law,) than I can find the battle of Waterloo in the Apocalypse of St. John." This he ought to have done for the benefit of those who thought they saw things in the word of God which he could not find, and out of respect to several hitherto esteemed judicious writers, who have not hesitated to say they could find it prohibited "in the words of that code." But even supposing that our author had completely succeeded in proving that the Westminster divines, the Edwards' and Livingstons', and others, have been entirely mistaken on this subject, still I cannot see how this could make his case any stronger.—On the contrary, if their statements be well founded, they will materially serve to confirm all his arguments.

But there is another evil attending this concession. Were it generally allowed, it would have a tendency to confirm the friends of such marriages in their error, or at least to furnish them with a pretext to justify their conduct. This is in fact the use made of it (improperly no doubt) by a writer in the *Commercial Advertiser* of 9th Feb'y. 1827. "If the law of Moses," says that writer, "is silent on the subject, then every man is his own judge. But there are words of Moses, in the Old, and words of Christ and of Paul, in the New Testament, sufficient to satisfy every party to such marriage that the connexion is moral and honourable." It is true, that this and similar assertions, are entitled to no credit whatever; for though the authors of them loudly complain, that no part of scripture is produced, directly condemning such marriages, and say they can find words of Moses, and of Christ, and of Paul, to show that they are moral and honourable, yet they never find it convenient to tell us where the words are found written. Nay, they cannot even produce a constructive argument in favour of them, from any part of the Bible. But still, this serves to show the impropriety of making concessions that are more than questionable, that can serve no good purpose, and that are altogether uncalled for. In a word, I cannot but be of opinion, that it would be more agreeable to truth, and certainly far more advisable, to admit with the Westminster divines, and Drs. Edwards and Livingston, and many other good and holy men, that incestuous marriages are directly forbidden in the word of God, and that their prohibition is designed by a wise and gracious God to promote the purity of morals and the general good of society, as clearly established by *Domesticus*.

The other objections I have to this letter is of the same nature with the one just mentioned, and probably rises out of it. It is to the rule by which the author proposes to determine how much of the law of Moses is binding on us. This rule he takes to be, general expediency, as apprehended by the common sense of mankind. "Before therefore," says he, "a Mosaic statute can be acknowledged to possess a binding authority over me, or the community of which I am a member, I must ascertain its reason, its principle. If on a fair and candid examination, I discover that the reason fully holds, the statute I pronounce to be binding. If there be a difference of circumstances, not however destructive of the general reason, I am bound to modify so as to suit the peculiarity. If circumstances be so different, that the reason ceases altogether, it is abrogated." p. 7. In a note at the bottom of the page, expediency is explained to mean fitness;

and it is added, that expediency is just fitness to promote happiness, and that it is certain that the Almighty has never willed an inexpedient thing since the creation of the world. In this last sentiment I perfectly agree with the author of the letter. I most cordially concede at once, that the Almighty has never willed any thing inexpedient. I also willingly adopt the definition of expediency, given above, that it is "just fitness to promote happiness." But with all these admissions, I think there is good reason why "this polysyllable should startle some divines." I do not, however, object so much to the word expediency, as to the standard by which it is proposed that it should be ascertained. With all due respect for the common sense of mankind, I must object to it as the standard of morality. Were mankind possessed of infinite wisdom and knowledge, and unchangeable integrity, then there could be no possible objection to this standard. But since the scriptures declare, that the imagination of the heart of man is only evil continually—that the understanding of men is darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; and especially if it be admitted, (which cannot indeed be denied,) that the common sense of mankind has often led them to will things that are very inexpedient, I think we have good cause for rejecting the common sense of mankind as the rule for ascertaining the expediency of things. And as it is admitted on all hands, that "the Almighty has never willed an inexpedient thing since the creation of the world," therefore I argue, the will or word of God is the only unexceptionable and infallible rule whereby we can ascertain the expediency of things. God hath given us his holy word for this express purpose, and this is the use which his faithful servants have studied to make of it. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path"—"thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart." Psalm cxix. It may therefore be laid down as a rule, that whatever is agreeable to the word of God, is dutiful and expedient, and whatever is contrary to the word of God, is inexpedient and sinful.

It may, perhaps, be thought that I have given too unfavourable a view of the author's sentiments on this subject, especially as he disclaims the lower and less honourable sense in which expediency is sometimes taken, and admits that "rational speculations on this fitness must never take place, above, or even along with the will of God; but they aid us exceedingly in discovering what the will of God is." Now it is just this explanation that has led me to take this view of the subject. It shows plainly,

that the method he proposes for ascertaining truth, is that mankind, by their common sense, should first ascertain the general expediency of a thing, and if it be expedient, then they are to conclude that it is agreeable to the word of God, because it is certain "the Almighty has never willed an inexpedient thing;" which is in fact to make the common sense of mankind the judge of expediency and the standard of morality. This I fear is beginning at the "wrong end;" for it is surely not showing too much respect to the word of God, first to ascertain the direct testimony it affords; and if we fail in this, it should be our next study to ascertain the general sense of scripture in regard to the subject under investigation; and if we succeed in doing this, we will not fail, unless it be through the ignorance that is in us, in determining what is really expedient.

I sincerely hope this is not the deliberate opinion of this able writer on this very important subject, but that it has escaped him inadvertently in the heat of composition; for it was written in great haste, as appears from the advertisement to the second edition. It seems there were some indelicate expressions in the first edition, and the author allows that they escaped him in this way, and that he was painfully surprised to find he had spoken so very plainly, when he had recovered from the heat of composition.—Now, although it might not have been advisable to have taken Horace's counsel in this case—

—— nonumque prematur in annum
Membranis intus positis, delere licebit
Quod non edederis. Nescit vox missa reverti.—*Ars Poet.* 388.*

because the case is to be decided in May next; yet I think it would have been advisable to have read it over, after he had cooled, before he sent it to the press.

Upon the whole, though these be defects of no small moment, yet I think this letter may be eminently useful. It is well calculated to show the dangerous consequences that may result from erasing the Article in question from the Confession of Faith.—I would warmly recommend to your readers to get this pamphlet, and read it for themselves; and I have no doubt they will be both pleased and profited by it. Above all, I hope it will be useful to the members of the next General Assembly; and, to use the words of the author, I hope they will pause before "they lead the way in casting down one of the bulwarks which have been erected round the domestic sanctuary."

* When you write any thing, let it be suppressed till the ninth year, your papers being laid up in your desk. You will then be able to blot out what you please, so long as it is not published; but when a word is sent abroad, it can never return.

For the Religious Monitor.

THE CHURCH GOD'S WITNESS.

(Concluded from page, 503.)

PROPOSITION IV. *In the faithful performance of this duty, the prosperity of religion, and of the visible church consists.*

Were all animated with a desire to witness faithfully for God, all would diligently search after the knowledge of the truth.—Conversation would be such as becometh the gospel. The way of duty would be to every one the way of pleasure and delight.—Parents would teach diligently these things, and talk of them in the house and field, when they sit down and rise up. Ministers would be instant in season, out of season, preaching diligently the whole counsel of God. And the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, would encrease to the edifying of itself in love. Confidence, harmony, and love, would mark the happy state. Prayer would be frequent, fervent and effectual. And the holy Spirit, descending as the copious shower upon the ordinances of divine grace, would make the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Sanctification of heart would advance, and external reformation would keep progress with it. Christ's prayer would be answered,—“Sanctify them through thy truth.” In the Millennium, which will surely be a prosperous time, the people will be so completely in the spirit of witnessing, that they are represented as those martyrs, living again, who were beheaded for the word of God and the testimony which they held.

If the statements above, set forth the church's true character, as God's witness, and the nature and extent of her duty as such, the application of them to existing circumstances will give reason to infer a number of truths very important, though not very pleasing.

But before I proceed to this, the reader must observe, that we are not always to form the same estimate of the state of religion in those churches that may be uniform in their doctrine and worship; because they may have come to that uniformity in consequence of the one making progress in the ways of truth and righteousness, and the other falling back from former attainments. Two travellers may meet at one place of the highway, while one comes from the east and the other from the west. They are side by side, but their faces are towards opposite points of the compass; their moving principle, their object of pursuit and destination, are all different. From this it may be easily perceived, that the same circumstances may indicate a state of backsliding and apostasy in

one church and not in another. They may, indeed, plainly infer deficiency and short coming in all churches, in which they obtain; but in one church they may mark the highest attainment yet made, and in another, a falling off. This remark must be understood as limiting the application of the following observations.

Further, let it be observed, that the *very same* spirit of backsliding and unfaithfulness may be leaving all the churches, but the indications of it may appear different in every one, both in degree and kind, owing, as may be easily perceived, to their different attainments in knowledge, which acts more or less as a restraint.— Suppose that one openly preaches error in doctrine, and substitutes in worship human inventions for divine institutions; another *will not do either* himself, but still he tries to palliate and excuse the conduct of his neighbour; a third, though he does not go this length, is wholly passive, and shows no dissatisfaction; and a fourth, may cry out against the bad effects and consequences of it, but yet even he does not go all the length of a faithful witness, and condemn it as contrary to the word of God. Though the indications be different, in each of these, yet, it is the same apostatizing principle that influences each. They may, like travellers, be one before another, and some considerable distance may intervene, but still they are all travelling the same road, and towards the same point, and if mercy prevent not, they will all certainly *reach* it.

Having premised these two things, I proceed to observe, that all the churches of the Reformation fall far short of maintaining their *witnessing* character; and some of them seem to be fast losing sight of it. To illustrate this, I shall endeavour to notice such things only, as none will dispute. First, there are extremely few of these churches that profess to consider a public standing judicial testimony to the whole of present truth as any part of their duty. There are yet some whose *PROFESION* amounts to this much; but in *practice*, even *they* fall far below it. Ministers and sessions not a few, in admitting persons into fellowship compromise present truth; and multitudes of people who profess to hold such a testimony, are opposed to it and through ignorance of it know not that they do so. Of those that make such a profession, it is but a very small minority that trouble themselves to become acquainted with it, and walk consistently with it. Some churches will agree to have a standing testimony; but not as any term of fellowship. Others plead for only an occasional one. And the great multitude treat this duty altogether with ridicule and contempt. The reason of this conduct in some, we believe in charity, is ignorance; in others it is the fear of shame and reproach; and

in others, it is the spirit of apostacy. They know better; and the time was when they acted differently. But whatever be the reason, this opposition to a testimony so far as it exists, proves in God's *witness* a deficiency in knowledge, and practices of the most dangerous consequences.

Public Religious Covenanting has been mentioned as a duty, the peculiar object of which is to give the church an opportunity of appearing *publicly* for God and his truth. Some churches hold this to be a moral duty and sometimes seasonable in new testament times. Others hold more generally that it is to be practiced when circumstances require it. And others have not condescended to state their belief concerning it. But, with the exception of two or three instances, all habitually neglect it. And if there are some whose views are theoretically sound, it makes no difference in their practice. Therefore the witnessing character, so far as concerned in this duty, is laid aside.

Several efforts have been made, and are still making, to abolish all Creeds and Confessions from the church. Your number for Nov. last, contains an article, (p. 272,) which shows how successful these efforts have been in Ireland. The endeavours of Messrs. Duncan and M'Lean, ministers of the General Assembly in this country, are also publicly known. To estimate fairly this indication of the existing state of things, we have to take into the account, all those who have exerted themselves to prevent, or to defeat, judicial process entered against their conduct; all those who have been passive and unconcerned about it, or make light of it, as a matter of no essential importance; all such as would compromise the matter; yea, all who have not felt alarmed at it, as a measure well calculated to raze foundations, and precipitate every association of men, civil or religious, into confusion and ruin.

Perhaps, I might venture to affirm, that the *Plan of Catholic Communion*, as it is commonly termed, is the root out of which the *No Creed System* necessarily grows. This species of communion is so generally held, throughout the United States, that very few, if any, of your readers, can be at a loss to understand the phrase. If the fruit is bad, it is difficult to conceive how the root can be good. If the setting aside all Creeds and Confessions, as tests of orthodoxy and terms of fellowship, is calculated to unhinge all social order in the visible church, and stands directly opposed to the witnessing character and Spirit, in every particular, the present scheme of catholic communion, cannot have a different effect. Here, also, I would observe, that we must, in order to estimate the extent to which this anti-witnessing scheme

prevails, take into the account, those who are just entering upon it, and those who have made some progress, as well as those, who have carried it to perfection. Some are ready to sit down at the communion table with all to whom a feverish charity can extend the name, Christian. Others, have not got quite so far, and limit themselves to those whom they consider sound in the *essentials*. Others, still farther back, would have it confined to *Calvinistic Presbyterians*. And some, just beginning to be liberal, who cannot see so far, nor so clearly, as any of these, yet think, that measures might be adopted and a junction formed, between them and their nearest neighbours in profession; and upon changing their place of residence or their connections, manifest their readiness to approve of it, by accomodating their profession to their conveniency. Others, condemn such laxness and, are resolved to keep in the good old path, from which they never deviate, except—"their *curiosity* has been strongly excited," or—"they were *strongly urged*," or—"they did not like to be *singular*." How many, all these different grades would make, it is impossible to tell; but there is no church, known to the writer, which does not contain a great many of them.

Out of this Catholic Root, has also sprung all the unions and half unions, between different bodies, that have been YET effected. Also, the greater part of all the Missionary, Sabbath School and Tract Societies, evidently come from the same source. Far be it from me to decry union among Christians, that is *truly* such, or plans of co-operation, truly scriptural. The differences in sentiment and practice, that obtains among Christians, is to be considered as a grievous evil, and should be deeply lamented.—But what have unions hitherto been? While they have utterly set at naught the divine injunction, "Hold that fast which thou hast," (Rev. iii. 11.) they have been merely nominal and external, without any thing like the spirit of christian fellowship and communion. Either an agreement to differ, or to expunge from the joint profession, or plan of co-operation, a number of truths, under the character of non-essentials, or both, which, taken either way, amounts precisely to an agreement to cease bearing witness, so far as the points at issue, between them, are concerned. The conclusion, then, is, that it is as preposterous as it is unscriptural, to look any farther, for christian union, than there is a seeing eye to eye. Besides, the distinction of truths into essentials and non-essentials, is itself a wide-spreading evil; for while none have yet been able to discover where the line ought to be drawn, every one draws for himself, where he finds it most convenient.

And by the time that every one's non-essentials are lopped off, neither root nor fibre of truth will remain.

There are not a few bold encroachments made, and making, upon the order, worship and doctrine of the church. Perhaps my ideas of an encroachment, would not be sustained as correct, by every one. If a minister and session should ordain elders with the imposition of hands, teaching at the same time, that authority to teach, is imparted, I would call that an *encroachment*. If a *female* missionary were to be set apart to her enterprize, by prayer and imposition of hands, in the presence of a congregation, I should call that an encroachment. Likewise females preaching. And male preachers who take it upon themselves without any license or authority from any organized society of Christians. But these two classes, might be more properly termed, impostors. When human compositions are employed in the praise of God—when the whole congregation remains silent, and the choir only sings,—when instrumental music is introduced into God's worship, I call it encroachment. When children are baptized privately—when this ordinance is dispensed to those who are not members, but only subscribers or pew holders—when persons of this order are allowed to vote for ministers or elders, and to have the management of church affairs, I call it encroachment. Here, also, I include, as infected with the spirit of encroachment, the silent, the passive, the neutral, and the charitable mids-men, who are ready with their healing measures. It will not be disputed by many, that Socinian, Arminian and Hopkinsian tenets greatly prevail, and powerful efforts are still making to diffuse them.—Seminaries are instituted, funds are established, auxiliary societies are formed, all for this purpose. And all who countenance or assist any of these, are either favourable to these tenets, or indifferent about all tenets. All this stands directly opposed to the witnessing Spirit, and aims a deadly blow at the TWO WITNESSES.

The Revival System, has become so general in the United States, that it may be considered as a distinct feature in our times. It may not be easy to form a correct estimate of that system; but there are some things that may be observed respecting it, without prejudice to truth. First, it was not begun, nor is it carried on, by the instrumentality of faithful witnessing; neither does it incline those that are *revived* to become faithful witnesses, or cultivate a regard for all God's truth. Second, Hopkinsian and Arminian preachers appear to be as devoted to it, and more successful in it, than any that are perfectly Calvinistic. Hence I infer, that these former consider it as agreeable and congenial to

their views and sentiments, and that it really is so. Third, what is termed by way of reproach, *cold, orthodox preaching*, is said, by those who profess to understand the business, not to be adapted to excite a revival, but rather to throw cold water on the flame that is kindled. From this I infer, that there is no friendship between it and *cold orthodoxy*; and therefore, so far as the former gains favour and acceptance, the latter must lose it. Consequently, this Revival System, is just the fainting and declining of the witnessing system. It is, indeed, confidently styled, the work of the holy Spirit: and the state of souls are spoken of, as anxious, —hopeful,—born again,—truly pious,—rejoicing, &c. in language as positive, as if it were an object of the senses, or the result of mathematical calculation; and yet, melancholy to tell! these very persons, whose happy condition has been trumpeted from Dan to Beersheba, are found, after a time, returning like the dog to his vomit, or the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire: and their last state, is worse than the first.—What, then, was THEIR revival? Either it was an abortive attempt of the holy Spirit to sanctify and cleanse them, or it was a delusion. If it was the former, then we are no longer kept in the dark;—it is the old Arminian leaven; but if the latter, then revivals are, at the best, of extremely dubious character; for the appearance of these relapsed ones, was as flattering, and their state as positively asserted, as any could be.

A great many men are vested with the ministerial office, who are scarcely acquainted with the first principles of knowledge, and have need to be taught even by many whom they are sent to teach. Surely this argues nothing favourable to the witnessing spirit, either in those who send them forth into the church, or in those who are sent, or in them to whom such men are acceptable. How can men, who do not *know* the truth, contend earnestly for it? Besides, when superficial, declamatory harangues, obtain the place and the esteem of gospel preaching, it is an evidence, that the public taste has become vitiated, and that the painful and faithful minuteness which characterized the preaching of better days, would be unpalatable.

A temporizing, worldly policy, so far as it prevails, must also be considered as indicating a decline of the witnessing spirit.—Nor, will it be denied, that it does prevail to a great extent, among ministers and people. The eye that is jaundiced by this disease, can see the church and religion prospering no where, but among large assemblies; splendid houses of worship; fine orators, with great salaries; great outward show, and no persecution or reproach for the cross' sake. In order to attain to this prosperous

state, and preserve it when attained, the people must make elders of the wealthiest and most influential of their members;—they must choose a minister of the most pleasing and popular talents. The minister must take special care, in his applications, not to probe too deep the sores of his hearers; nor dwell too much, nor too frequently, on the wickedness of the human heart. In admissions, he and the session must be very easy and tender to the feelings, and take care to let none go away displeased or disappointed. In discipline, they must be very sure not to hurt the feelings of the grossest offender, especially if he be rich. They *must* be polite and accommodating; and the church will soon prosper. Ah! what a mistake. The carnal mind is greatly pleased, but where is vital, practical godliness? Where is God's faithful witness?

The neglect of family duties, either in whole or in part, also betrays the lukewarmness of the heart to the interests of divine truth. Because, in the family, God has appointed the foundation of knowledge, and of a religious character, to be laid. He has given the most peremptory charge, to parents, to "teach them diligently these things, and train them up in the way that they should go." And when this is neglected, it is impossible for any other provision fully to repair the damage. That this all important duty is very generally neglected, I think is perfectly evident, from the great necessity pleaded for Sabbath Schools. It is impossible to account for this neglect, but by supposing that love to the interests of truth, in the future generation, has waxen cold; and that baptismal vows, and other pledges of fidelity to God's truth, have in a great measure ceased to act upon the conscience.

Vice of every name, is directly and formally at war with *witness bearing*. And to what a dreadful and alarming extent it prevails, every serious and attentive Christian is fully aware.—He has only to look at the haunts and receptacles of the vicious and the guilty; penitentiaries and prisons; stores and taverns.—It would almost be incredible to mention the amount of Sabbath breaking, and drunkenness, which every day and every week, abounds. It would be a disgrace to the dark ages of popery and to pagan superstition. Nor is it limited to the ignorant and the openly wicked, it has found its way among professors of religion; men of talents and great usefulness.

With all this we are constantly hearing of the happy time in which we live! That we live in the age of light, liberality, love and harmony. Newspapers abound, with details of the most happy and extensive progress of the Spirit's work, in towns and

neighbourhoods We are just in the very commencement of that blissful period, the Millennium. (May the good Lord deliver us from such a Millennium!) When these flaming stories come abroad, the words of the prophet come to my recollection, "They cry peace, peace, when there is no peace." "They heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly."

But, reader, you may depend upon it, when or wheresoever the Spirit of God performs a work in the heart of a man, it does not make "*him cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets.*"

I would now ask the question, will not God have a quarrel on account of these things? Suppose your character or property were depending on a suit; and you had summoned witnesses, whom you knew to be possessed of knowledge that would vindicate your cause; but they either suppressed or denied it, would you not be offended? would their conduct not be highly criminal? would it not be perjury?

Even so the righteous God cannot but be highly displeased at the unfaithfulness and the silence of his witnesses. Nor would it consist with his government of societies, which must have its ultimate effect upon them, in the present state, as they will not exist in the next; nor with the history of his providential dealings, to pass by such things without punishing them.

And there are many visible tokens of his displeasure, if we would but consider them. There is not a church at this time known to the writer which does not experience sufficient within herself, to convince the attentive that God is pleading a controversy with her. Is it not a little remarkable, that while the loud and frequent cry is heard of *union and harmony*, several of these very churches have difficulty in keeping together? If we look into the 4th and 7th chapters of Amos, we shall find that God contends with unfaithful and backsliding churches by withholding rain, and by diseases in the body, and by raising up grasshoppers and other creatures, to destroy the fruits of the ground. Have we not felt some of these strokes? And we see in the same 4th chapter, that when God contends, he continues to do so, until his church either returns, or is cast off from being his witness altogether. Consider now the fate of the ten tribes, and of the Jews, at this very day; and you will see this. If God spared not the natural branches, will he spare you? Look also at the fate of the seven churches of Asia. They became unfaithful witnesses: God contended with them. But they did not return; and where are they? If he should in his providence expose the false and perjured witness in his true character, and as

utterly unworthy of trust and confidence, every one would say it was a just judgment. God sometimes in this very way executes judgment upon perjured churches. The faith of the church of Rome was once spoken of throughout the whole world; what is her character now? Is there any so mad as to put trust and confidence in her word?

All that is necessary to fix down upon the Reformation churches this same infamy and disgrace, is, that God in his providence permits those very principles adverted to above, to extend their influence and be universally adopted. There is not one thing noticed which does not go to quench the witnessing spirit.

Only let them grow to maturity, and produce their full effect, and God's two witnesses will soon torment them that dwell upon the earth no more.

Though we cannot certainly know that this will be the case, I much fear we are advancing to that dark and dismal period.—What can appear more like it, than the setting aside of all creeds and confessions? And this has been long in agitation, and frequently attempted; but never since the Reformation did so many circumstances, and so generally prevailing, concur to favour the attempt, as now. But in the midst of deserved wrath, God may remember mercy and give us a reviving.

In the mean time, let the two witnesses, (that is, the few solitary ones up and down through the world, that are heartily desirous to be found faithful,) let them continue to be clothed in sackcloth. They are to take no part in the rejoicing and mirth around them; they are to sigh and cry for all the abominations and iniquities and backslidings that abound; they are to continue mourning and fasting and praying before the God of the whole earth.

Let fire proceed out their mouth and consume their enemies; that is, undoubtedly the word of God, which is as a fire, and a hammer which breaks the rocky heart in pieces. It is plain and faithful preaching, and witnessing against the prevailing errors and iniquities of their time, whether men will hear or forbear. They must not expect all the time of their prophecy to be popular, but the reverse. If God's word holds good, they will be accounted the *tormentors* of society. Nothing will be more gratifying than their hurt, their want of success, and their ruin. This they are to expect, and not think it strange, as though some strange thing happened unto them.

The utmost pains and diligence ought to be used to instruct those who come forward to succeed them, in the importance and the duties of the witnessing character of God's church. Without

this, it is not reasonable to expect that they will feel the one or perform the other, especially when the current of popular feelings and practices runs entirely in the opposite direction, and every stratagem that can be imagined is employed to draw them into it.

To explain all the common topics of divinity, is in general all that is aimed at in training young men for the ministry; and this is of essential importance. But this may be done both faithfully and successfully, and yet the concern which the church has with these truths, as God's witness, and the solemn obligation she is under to act in that particular character, never once come under particular observation.

No wise commander would deem it wise to teach his men only the general rules of fighting, the general character of all weapons, viz, that they are all either offensive or defensive—that fortifications ought to be so constructed as to be places of defence, and at the same time afford opportunity of annoying the enemy. This would be to do nothing to the purpose of his appointment, and trifle with the lives of men. He would advert particularly to the mode of warfare presently employed by the enemy with whom they were personally to contend,—their weapons, the way they use them, the way they advance and retreat, &c. The application of this is perfectly easy.

The same remarks will apply to parents in teaching their families. It is the same truths and the same enemies they are concerned with. And their fidelity in this matter is of the last importance to the interests of truth. And their responsibility is most solemn. The witnessing Spirit of the church may be quenched through the ignorance of the next generation; but woe unto those guilty parents, who for the sake of a little more of this world, or their own carnal ease, have plighted their solemn and repeated vows, to “teach their children diligently these things.”

EGO.

Selections.

LETTERS ON THE ATONEMENT.—No. XI. & XII.

On the Law.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—

I must draw my epistles to a close; the importance of the subject discussed, has induced me to spend so much time in the investigation. They are now in a course of publication; and if the great Head of the church shall condescend to honour them as a means for rectifying the error of any reader, or for establishing

the minds of the wavering in the doctrine that has hitherto prevailed in the Presbyterian church, I shall deem myself well rewarded for the time and labour bestowed on them.

It only remains to contrast the two theories in relation to the HONOUR they reflect on the DIVINE law, and on our BLESSED REDEEMER.

Both schools concur in pronouncing on the Law of God the highest encomiums; believing it to be a transcript of his moral perfections, and worthy of the profoundest obedience of every rational creature. They agree in the sentiment, that the penalty which guards the sanctity of the law, involves a degree of misery far greater than is felt by any human being on this side the grave, and that it will run parallel with the eternal existence of the damned; and they strenuously maintain, that the infliction of this fearful penalty on every impenitent and unbelieving sinner, is a righteous procedure on the part of the Supreme Ruler of the universe. But they differ widely in their views of the bearing of the Mediator's work on the law.

You know, sir, that, in the contrast I am drawing, I do not refer to our brethren, who, while they believe in a *general* atonement, hold to its *true nature* as involving a *real satisfaction* to divine justice, and a *real infliction* of the threatened *penalty* on the sinner's glorious and spotless substitute. In my second letter it was shown, that between them and the advocates of a *definite* atonement, the difference is merely *verbal*, and that they have no ground for controversy with each other. This I wish to be kept in mind.*

The new school believe the perfect obedience which Christ yielded to the precepts of the divine law to have been necessary to his work as Saviour, and that the least defect in it would have defeated his benevolent design of saving sinners. But this belief is grounded, not on the necessity of the saved having a finished righteousness as the basis of their justification, but on the necessity of perfect holiness in the person of the Redeemer. Accordingly they deny that Christ, as the *legal representative* of his people, obeyed all the precepts of the law *for them*, that his righteousness, when received by faith, might be *imputed* to them, and render them righteous before God. They speak indeed of the sufferings of Christ as being a *substitute* for our sufferings; but at the same time deny that HE was *our substitute*, standing in *our law place*, bearing our sins and enduring the penalty due to them. The sufferings of the Saviour were a *consequence* of sin; but they were not an infliction of the curse of the law; because, say they, the law had no demands on him. The result is, that, ac-

* On this sentiment, see page 85.

according to the new theory, sinners are saved *without a righteousness*, and *without a satisfaction for sin*: and the death of Christ is made a mere *expedient* for SETTING ASIDE both the *preceptive* and the *penal* demands of the law upon them. Neither the one nor the other has been complied with *by* them, or *for* them, by a surety. In opposition to the righteous demands of a holy law, they appear in heaven in the presence of the great Lawgiver, who has pledged his truth that sin shall not go unpunished, and proclaimed it as part of his name or nature, that he will by *no means clear the guilty*.

Such views are deemed by the old school to be highly unscriptural, and really dangerous in their tendency, and in fact *subversive of the TRUE NATURE* of the atonement. They are unable to see how the law could be *magnified* and made *honourable*, by a transaction and scene of suffering which *it did not require*, and which in fact were intended to *prevent the fulfilment of its just and good demands*.

Very different are their views of the relation which the obedience and death of Immanuel bore to the law of God. In them they behold a complete fulfilment of all its demands on sinners, both *preceptive* and *penal*. Taught by an inspired apostle that "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, *made under the law*, to redeem them that were under the law," (Gal. iv. 4, 5,) they believe that the law had demands on Christ; and that by his holy life and bitter death he fulfilled them all, as the *substitute* and *legal representative* of every true believer. Assured too by the same apostle that "God *imputeth* RIGHTEOUSNESS *without works*;" (Rom. iv. 6.) "Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, *unto all and upon all* them that believe:" (Rom. iii. 21, 22,) they hold that the obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ even unto death, constitutes that righteousness by which sinners are justified; and that it is imputed for this purpose to every one who believes in Jesus. Thus sinners are saved in a way perfectly consistent with the *honour* of the divine law; none of its demands remain sacrificed; all are fully satisfied, not indeed by fallen man, but by his immaculate Redeemer; sin is pardoned, and yet punished. The saved appear in heaven before God in a complete righteousness; not a personal one, not through their "own righteousness, which is of the law;" but in that perfectly finished and glorious righteousness, in which the great apostle desired to be found, even "that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. iii. 9.

Such a transaction is glorious to the law. By the obedience of

Immanuel unto death, its precepts and its penalty have been declared to be just and reasonable and good. More honour has been done to the one than would have been rendered, if all mankind had persevered in sinless obedience: and higher honour put on the other, than if it had been inflicted on our whole race.

Let it not be objected, that the character of a substitute and representative is unknown to the law. Not so. The principle of representation was connected with it in its first operation on man; for, in the first covenant, Adam was constituted *the federal head and representative* of all his natural posterity: and if the world was ruined under such a dispensation without any reflection on the justice or goodness of the Almighty Creator, how can it be deemed inconsistent with these attributes of his nature, to establish a new and similar dispensation, for its recovery to holiness and happiness? That there is a striking analogy between the way in which we were ruined and the way in which we are recovered, is plainly taught in holy scripture. Having run a parallel between Christ and Adam, whom he styles "*the figure of him that was to come*," and the corresponding effects of the offence of the latter, and of the *righteousness* of the former, the apostle adds, "For as by *ONE MAN'S disobedience* many were made sinners, so by the *obedience* of *ONE* shall many be made righteous." Rom. v. 14—19. And, in 1 Cor. xv. 22, he asserts the same analogy; "for as *IN Adam* all die, so *IN Christ* shall all be made alive;" meaning, not as the Universalists teach, that all men will be ultimately saved by Christ, but that all *who are in Christ*, united to him by faith, and represented by him in his mediatorial work, shall be raised from the dead to the enjoyment of an immortal life of happiness and glory; just as all united to Adam by natural generation and by the relation established by the original covenant or constitution made with him as their representative, have become subject to death in all its terrible forms.

From this comparison, it is easy to see which of the two theories reflects the highest honour on the divine law. The one maintains its righteous demands in all their extent, and exhibits them as gloriously fulfilled in the life and death of the Son of God for all his people while the other prostrates them and with them, the truth of God in the dust.

The Redeemer's Glory.

- It remains only to show, that, as the views of the old school reflect higher honour on the perfections and law of God, than those of the new, so they present a nobler and more scriptural tribute of praise to the great Redeemer.

The atonement, says Mr. Beman, *merely opened the door of mercy to fallen man*. The writer of Dialogues, while he admits that Christ died with an intention to save the elect, and not others, and that he satisfied public justice, denies that he made any satisfaction to *distributive justice*, and affirms that the gift of Christ resulted from no *special love* of Jehovah to his chosen, but from that *general benevolence* in which all share, and that *common compassion* which is not denied even to the damned. Others represent the atonement as consisting in an exhibition of the evil of sin, and in a declaration of God's hatred of it and its desert of punishment; and affirm that, if not one soul were saved, the proper end of the death of Christ would be answered, and its full effect produced.

With these views of our brethren we cannot accord. They are either *erroneous* or *defective*. They detract from the honour due to the atonement of our blessed Lord; they remove it from that central and all important point in the scheme of salvation, which inspired writers have assigned to it; and they detract from it the glory of effects which it really produces. That it opened the door of hope and mercy to this wretched world is certain; but we regard it also as the *meritorious cause* of our salvation. While we admit a display of the evil of sin, of its desert of punishment, and of God's hatred of it, and of his justice, to be the result of the atonement; we maintain its *true nature* to consist in *making satisfaction* for sin. The idea that the end of the atonement would have been answered, although none of our fallen race had been saved, we reject as entirely derogatory to the wisdom of God and the merits of his Son; contending that, as an atonement carries in its nature the notion of a *satisfaction*, the salvation of all who were given to the Redeemer must certainly follow in the *manner* and *time* agreed upon in the eternal counsel of the Holy Trinity; and that to have left their salvation uncertain, as it would have reflected on Infinite Wisdom, so it would have been inconsistent with the infinite value of the price paid for their redemption. We make the atonement of Jesus Christ the procuring cause of every blessing bestowed on the church, both in this and the next world.

In my third letter (pp. 174, 175) it was shown, that the inspired writers represent every blessing of salvation as the *fruit* of Christ's death: such as forgiveness, reconciliation, justification, peace, adoption, sanctification, and the heavenly inheritance. Now, it is plain such a representation could not be properly made, if the death of Christ merely opened the door of hope and mercy. These blessings ought, in that case, to be denominated

the fruit of Divine grace ONLY, and not of the atonement; but as the atonement did really merit them for sinners, they are justly represented as the fruit, at once of the death of Christ, and of Divine grace; because they really are so; and grace is justly celebrated as reigning "through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. v. 21.

An inspection of the texts cited in the letter just referred to, must convince any reflecting mind, that there is a real established connexion, between the death of the Redeemer and all the blessings of salvation. But what, it will be asked, is that connexion? In reply to this question, it may, I think, be truly affirmed, that it is the connexion which exists between *cause* and *effect*, between a *price* and a *purchase*, between a *service rendered* and a *stipulated reward*.

Let not the investigation of this question be regarded as a mere matter of curious speculation. If the scriptures speak on it we are bound to hear and learn; and it would ill become us to turn away our ears from the voice of heavenly wisdom, contenting ourselves with believing that some *general undefined* connexion subsists, between our salvation and the death of Christ. Will any say that this point belongs merely to the philosophy of Christianity? I would admonish them not to disparage by such a name, a truth which Infinite Wisdom has seen fit to teach the church. It is precisely one of those particulars, in which the knowledge of Christians transcends that of ancient saints; one that involves the glory of the Redeemer and the comfort of his people. We proceed therefore to inquire what the New Testament teaches on this question.

1. It teaches that the connexion between the death of Christ and our salvation is that of *cause and effect*. If it were not of this nature, with what propriety could the inspired writers attribute the cleansing of the soul from its moral pollutions to his blood? That they do so is incontrovertibly plain: "Unto him that loved us, and hath *washed us from our sins in his own blood*." But this, it will be said, is figurative language. Admitted; it has however, a *real* meaning; and what can the meaning be, except this: that, as the body is cleansed from its pollution by the application of water, so the soul is really cleansed from the pollution and guilt of sin, by the application of the Saviour's blood to it by faith. Accordingly we hear the apostle (1 John i. 7.) say, in plain language, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son *cleanseth us from all sin*:" teaching us that his precious blood operates, *as a cause*, in purifying the soul from moral defilement, *as really* as water does in purifying the body from the pollutions

of contaminating substances. The same truth is taught by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ix. 13, 14, where he shows the superiority of Christ's sacrifice to those typical sacrifices that were offered under the law: "For, if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, *purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*" The blood of the Levitical sacrifices were the constituted cause of ceremonial purification; and, in like manner, the blood of Christ is a more powerful cause, of real internal purification of the sinner's conscience, from the guilt and pollution of sin.

2. Between the death of Christ and the blessings of salvation, there exists *the connexion found between a price and its purchase*. That his blood is denominated a *price*, and that we are said to be *bought*, is asserted by inspired writers too plainly to be denied by any acquainted with scriptural language; and some of our brethren seem willing to allow that *we* were bought with a price; but deny that any price was paid for the *blessings of salvation*. Yet from the admission of the former truth, the latter must follow as a legitimate consequence. For when a person buys a thing, that thing becomes the buyer's property. In what sense then, I ask, were we bought by Jesus Christ? Were we not his property before he paid the price? Were we not his creatures, dependent on him for existence and every thing; and had he not a perfect and sovereign right to dispose of us as he pleased? How then did he buy us? What new right did he acquire over us by his purchase? He bought us out of the hands of Divine justice, and from under the curse of the law, that he might save us; he acquired by his purchase the right of delivering us from the dominion of sin and Satan, and bestowing on us eternal life. "Father," said our Redeemer, as he was finishing the payment of the mighty price of our redemption, "the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, *that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*" John vii. 1, 2.

Besides, as the sacred writers do, as we have proved, connect the blessings of salvation with the death of Christ as their *real meritorious cause*; and as they expressly call his death a *price*; it must follow, that the one is connected with the other, just as a thing purchased is with the price paid. And this is taught still plainer in that remarkable passage in Peter's first epistle: (chap. i. 18, 19.) "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed

with corruptible things, as silver and gold, *from your vain conversation* received by tradition from your fathers; but with the *precious blood* of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Now, here deliverance from vain conversation, from a foolish and sinful life, or in other words, *sanctification*, is affirmed to have been purchased with the blood of Christ; and if this leading blessing of salvation was, then it will follow, that all others were thus purchased. Accordingly, we find this asserted by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but *by his own blood* he entered in once into the holy place, *having obtained* ETERNAL REDEMPTION *for us*." Heb. ix. 12. Eternal redemption will, it is presumed, be admitted in this passage, to comprehend all the blessings of salvation; or if any should wish to object, they ought to be convinced by the 15th verse, where the apostle goes on to say—"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, *that BY MEANS OF DEATH*, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament; *they which are called might receive the promise of the* ETERNAL INHERITANCE." Here then the blessings of salvation, not excepting the eternal inheritance, are attributed to the death of Christ as their *meritorious cause*, or *price paid* for them. See also Gal. iii. 13, 14.

It is in vain for our brethren to endeavour to explain away this scriptural truth, by alleging the death of Christ was not a *literal price*. For if by this they mean the blood of Christ was not *silver and gold*, they assert what no one can be ignorant of, and guard against an error which none are in danger of adopting. But the blood of Immanuel, though not silver nor gold, yet was a *REAL price*; infinitely more valuable in the sight of God and acceptable to Divine justice, than all the treasures of earthly kingdoms. That the purchase of our salvation by this amazing price is perfectly consistent with the *reign of free and sovereign grace* throughout the whole work, from beginning to end, was, you will remember, shown in my third letter. To the arguments there used to establish the entire harmony of salvation by grace, and salvation by the righteousness of Christ, it is not deemed necessary to offer any thing additional.

3. The connexion between the death of Christ and our salvation, is the same as that which exists *between a service rendered and a stipulated reward*.

A work was assigned to Jesus Christ by his eternal Father. This work consisted in his active and passive obedience, or, in other words, in his obedience even unto death. So we are taught by holy scripture. He himself says, "sacrifice and offering thou

didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Ps. xl. 6, 8. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." John vi. 38. Speaking of laying down his life, the Saviour says, "This commandment have I received from my Father." John x. 18. And at the close of life, just before his crucifixion, he said, "Father, I have glorified thee on the earth; I have *finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*" His exaltation followed, not merely as a consequent follows an antecedent, but as a reward of a stipulated service. His reward consisted in his being raised, as man and mediator, to the mediatorial throne, invested with supreme dominion over the church and the world, over men and angels, for the purpose of saving unnumbered sinners of our race, to the glory of divine grace. Both prophets and apostles inculcate this delightful truth. "Thy throne, O God," exclaims David, while contemplating the beauty and glory of the promised Messiah, "is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou *lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness:* THEREFORE, God, thy God, *hath anointed thee with the oil of joy above thy fellows.*" Ps. xlv. 6, 7. In his prophetic view of humiliation and exaltation, the death and resurrection, the obedience and reward of Christ, Isaiah says, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. THEREFORE will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; BECAUSE HE HATH Poured out his soul unto death." Isaiah liii. 10, 12. Having recited the several steps in the humiliation of the Son of God, from his assumption of the form of a servant, to his death on the cross, the apostle Paul declares his reward: "WHEREFORE God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii. 9, 11. And the Redeemer himself proclaims the same truth, in his solemn intercessory prayer; in which, immediately after stating the completion of his work, he prefers his claim to the promised reward: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the

glory which I had with thee before the world was. Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory which *thou hast given me*: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." John xvii. 5, 14. To this glorious reward the apostle refers, when, speaking of the Redeemer, he says, "Who for *the joy that was set before him*, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. xii. 2.

Thus are we taught to conceive of the nature of the connexion subsisting between the death of Christ and our salvation. It is that of *cause and effect*, that of a *price* and its *purchase*, that of a *service rendered* and a *stipulated reward*. To speak then of the atonement as *merely* opening the door of hope and mercy, is ascribing to it not half the praise due to that amazing transaction; and to assert that its end would be accomplished, although not one human soul were saved, is to derogate from the glory of HIM who died that we might live, and hung upon a cross, that we might ascend a throne. The *design*, both of the Father who gave his Son, and of the Son who gave himself, to be a sacrifice for sin, was, *to secure the salvation* of all believers, and of all who were chosen to salvation in the eternal purposes of heaven. This glorious effect must be produced, or the atonement would fail in accomplishing its grand design. But failure is impossible. "I lay down my life for the *sheep*. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also *must* I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." John x. 15, 16. "All that the Father giveth me *shall* come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, *that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day*. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and *believeth* on him, may have everlasting life; and *I will raise him up again at the last day*." John vi. 37, 39, 40. Such is the scriptural connexion between the death of Christ and the salvation of believers; a connexion clearly pointed out, and strongly marked by inspired teachers. It is one of those glorious truths which we owe to divine revelation, and which we are bound by divine authority to believe, and apply to those practical purposes it is intended to subserve. It has an important bearing on a Christian's experience. It is calculated to excite his joy, and awaken his gratitude; while it points out to him the sacred fountain in which he is to wash, that he may be cleansed from all the stains of guilt, and all the pollution of sin.

The atonement we justly honour, when we conceive of it as

the *procuring, meritorious cause* of salvation, and as the *infinite price* paid by the Son of God for the redemption of all his chosen people; and when we believe that the free and sovereign grace of God, as it provided, so will not fail to apply this infallible remedy, discovered by infinite wisdom, for healing the dread full diseases produced by sin. By his obedience unto death, Christ was "made" a "perfect" High Priest; and thus, by *his blood*, "became the *AUTHOR of eternal salvation* unto all them that obey him." See Heb. v. 8, 9, and ii. 10.

Having finished the discussion, permit me now to recapitulate the several points in which the two schemes of atonement have been contrasted. In my first letter it was shown, that, notwithstanding the broad assertions of the New School about its extent, the *indefinite* is not more extensive than the *definite* atonement, either *in regard to the merit of Christ's death*, or *in reference to its application*, or *in respect to the offer of salvation*, or *in relation to the divine purpose*: and, in fact, that the views of our brethren, in this particular, have no advantage whatever over ours. In the second, third, and fourth letters, the doctrine of the two schools was compared, in respect to the preaching of the gospel, and the display of free and sovereign grace, in the recovery of fallen man; and it was, I trust, proved, that there is nothing in our views of the atonement, to prevent the general preaching of the gospel to all nations, and all classes of mankind; nothing to hinder a free and unrestricted offer of salvation to every one who hears us, and to assure him, that if he believe, he will certainly be saved: that there is no inconsistency whatever in representing, as the inspired writers plainly do, the blessings of salvation as being, at once, the *fruits of Christ's death*, and the *fruits of free and sovereign grace*; and that if there were any difficulty in this matter, the attempt of our brethren to remove it, by asserting the Redeemer satisfied *public*, and not *distributive* justice, is futile. We compared the views entertained by the two schools of the nature of the atonement, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh letters; where it appeared, that our doctrine accords with scriptural statements and representations on the subject; and that, as our brethren mistake, so by denying the *real satisfaction* made by the Son of God in his character of *substitute* of his people, charged with their sins, and sustaining the penalty of the law due to them, they, in fact, *subvert the TRUE NATURE* of the atonement, and oppose clear and positive testimonies of inspired writers. In the remaining letters I endeavoured to prove, that the doctrine of the Old, is to be preferred to that of the New School; because it puts higher honour on the *truth*, the *justice*, and the

love of God; because it better guards the *rights* and *demands* of the divine law; and because it affords a brighter display of the *mediatorial glory* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Committing these letters to the patronage and blessing of that Almighty Redeemer whose work I have endeavoured to illustrate, and whose glory I have attempted to magnify.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours affectionately,

LYING.

A writer in the Literary Gazette, in noticing Mrs. Opie's "Illustrations of Lying," has the following remarks, which we recommend to the attention of parents.

"There is one class of lies, which we are a little surprised did not attract a larger share of Mrs. Opie's attention—*lies told by parents to children*. We believe that the slight regard in which strict truth is held among mankind, is principally owing to the lies which are told to children by their parents during the few first years of their lives. Then is the time that permanent impressions may be as well made as at any later period. It is then, probably, that what is called the natural propensity of a child is unfolded. Many persons who have a great abhorrence for lying, and whip their children if they detect them in it, yet make no scruple of telling and acting to them the most atrocious falsehoods. There are few persons who do not do this in a greater or less degree, though doubtless without dreaming they are guilty of criminal deception. With many, the whole business of managing their children is a piece of mere artifice and trick. They are cheated in their amusements, cheated in their food, cheated in their dress. Lies are told them to get them to do any thing which is disagreeable. If a child is to take physic, the mother tells him she has something good for him to drink; if recusant, she says she will send for the doctor to cut off his ears, or pull his teeth, or that she will go away and leave him, and a thousand things of the same kind, each of which may deceive once, and answer the present purpose, but will invariably fail afterwards. Parents are too apt to endeavour to pacify their children by making promises they never intend to perform. If they wish, for instance, to take away some eatable which they fear will be injurious, they reconcile them by the promise of a ride, or a walk, or something else which will please them, but without any intention of gratifying them. This is lying, downright lying. People think nothing of breaking their promises to children, if the performance be not

perfectly convenient. But they are the last persons to whom promises should be broken, because they cannot comprehend the reason, if there be one, why they are not kept. Such promises should be scrupulously redeemed, though at a great inconvenience, and even when inadvertently made. For the child's moral habit is of infinitely more consequence, than any such inconvenience can be to a parent.

We have only noticed a few of the cases of lying to children, but enough to illustrate the frequency of it. And yet after having pursued such a course of deception for the two or three first years of life, if the parent then finds his child is trying to deceive him, and will tell a downright lie, he wonders how he should have learned to do so, for he has always taught him to speak the truth; without reflecting that he has been lying to him from his very birth. So he attributes that habit to an innate disposition and tendency for falsehood, which he has himself been fostering and nourishing from the first. Children soon learn to know when they are deceived, and learn to deceive others. They are not deceived many times in the same way; and the most comfortable method in the end, as well as the most conformable to the precepts of morality and religion, is, never to deviate in the slightest degree, from the strict truth in our intercourse with them."

Select Religious Intelligence.

From the London Christian Examiner for February.

PROGRESS OF THE REFORMATION IN IRELAND.

At Cavan Church, (53 miles N. W. of Dublin) on Sabbath, Dec. 31st, *thirty nine* persons. (19 men, and 20 women) conformed to the established church. On the following Sabbath, Jan. 17th, the number of conformists was twenty-one (11 men and 10 women.) On Jan. 14, twenty-four renounced Popery (7 men and 17 women.) And on Sunday, Jan. 21st, thirty-six of whom 15 were men, and 21 women.

At the church of *Ballyhaise*, on Sabbath, Dec. 31st, one person renounced the Roman faith; on Sabbath, Jan. 7th, 6, viz 2 men and 4 women, conformed; the following Sabbath, Jan 14, three persons, 2 men and 1 women,—abjured Popery; and on Sabbath. Jan. 21st, the number of conformists was nine, one man and eight women.

In *Arvagh* church, on Sabbath, Jan. 14, one man and two women renounced Popery: and in the parish of Killesandra, one person conformed on Sabbath, Jan. 21st.

The total number of persons who have conformed in the county Cavan since the 8th of October, amounts to 476, exclusive of those who have renounced Popery in other parts of Ireland.

The Editor of the Examiner says:—

"The progress of the Reformation in Ireland, and the impotence of the priests to check it, are now manifest, and every part of Ireland is prepared to assert its moral and intellectual rights. Would that our landholders knew their real interests, and would afford protection to those who, would gladly, if assured of personal safety, come over to Protestantism."

POPISH SUPERSTITION IN THE UNITED STATES.

Among the books which are held in high estimation by the Catholics, not only in Europe, but also in the United States, is one with the following title—"The Pious Guide to prayer and devotion, containing various practices of piety calculated to answer the demands of the devout members of the Roman Catholic Church."

From this volume the subjoined is an extract:—

"An Agnus Dei, so called from the image of the Lamb of God impressed on the face of it, is made of Virgin wax, balsam and chrism, blessed according to the Roman ritual.—The spiritual efficacy of it, which is to preserve him who carries an Agnus Dei or any particle of it about him, from the attempts of his spiritual or temporal enemies—from the dangers of fire, of water, storms and tempests, of thunder and lightning, and from sudden death. It puts the devils to flight—succours women in childbed—takes away the stain of past sins, and furnishes us with new grace for the future, that we may be preserved from all adversities and peril both in life and death, through the cross and merits of the Lamb who redeemed and washed us in his own blood. The pope consecrates the Agnuses Dei the first year of his pontificate, and then every seventh year, on the Sunday before Low Sunday, with many fine ceremonies, and devout prayers."—Page 277.

THE FRENCH CHURCH.

The following statement of the Roman Catholic and Protestant Clergy in France, with their respective stipends, paid by the French Government, is extracted from documents laid before the Chambers by the Minister of the interior.

Roman Catholic Clergy.—The established Church of France is composed of four cardinals, one of whom, the archbishop of Paris, has 100,000 francs yearly, about \$20,000; the other three 30,000 each, about 6000. There are 18 archbishops, besides the metropolitan, who receive each 25,000 francs, \$5000; 66 bishops, each 15,000; 174 vicars general, each from 2000 to 4000; 660 canons or prebendaries, each from 1500 to 2400; 2917 cures or rectors, each from 1100 to 1600; 22,316 deservants or curates, each from 750 to 900 francs per-annum. To the colleges for educating the younger clergy, 940,000 francs, or \$188,000; and for repairing and building churches, 200,000, or \$40,000. The whole expense of the establishment, including annuities to the infirm clergy, is estimated at 25,650 francs, or \$5,130,000!

Protestant Clergy.—The Calvinists have three pastors, who receive yearly each 3000 francs; 28 who receive each 1500; and lastly 195 pastors, each 1000—total Calvinist ministers, 295. There are 2 Lutheran pastors, each receiving 3000 francs; 25 each 2000; 21, each 1500; and 175 pastors, each 1000 total 220 Lutheran ministers. Sum total paid to the Protestant Clergy 623,000 francs, (\$124,600) 24,000 francs allowed for their colleges, and 50,000 for their place of worship—sum total for the Protestant religion, \$139,400. This sum is paid by the French government; but it must also be remarked, that there are many Protestant clergy in France, who do not receive any stipend from the government, it being a regulation not to make any grant where the Protestant population does not amount to a thousand.

A NOTABLE MIRACLE.

The following extract from the last number of "the Catholic Miscellany," published at Charleston, under the sanction of the Catholic Bishop England, is a lamentable evidence, that the spirit of deception and delusion which characterized the dark ages of that fallen church is still actively engaged in opposing the true doctrine of the cross, and in rivetting the chains of darkness on its deluded votaries. What a striking commentary are such things on 2d Thess. ii. 7—11.

Extract of a letter from Paris dated. Jan. 15, 1827.

"A Missioner was lately preaching in the open air, in the neighbourhood of Poitiers; it was towards the close of the day, and as his subject was on the miracles wrought on the finding of the true cross he gave an account of the appearance of the cross in the Heavens to the Emperor Constantine—he was proceeding in his discourse when suddenly all his auditors, to the number of some hundreds dropped on their knees, uttering loud acclamations of surprise, and directing his attention to a luminous cross that appeared in the air, apparently about 300 feet above their heads; it seemed about 80 feet in length, and after remaining a considerable time, disappeared. The Missioner immediately waited upon the authorities, ecclesiastical and civil, of Poitiers and gave testimony to what he saw—a process verbal was drawn up attested by several hundred persons. This circumstance has been spoken of for some days; it was only on this day I heard it authenticated."

Summary of Religious Intelligence.

BRIEF VIEW OF AFRICAN MISSIONS.

The following summary view of African Missions, is prepared from the annual survey of Missionary stations in the London Missionary Register.—The Missionaries and Teachers, are distinguished into Foreign and Native, and the Native Teachers are divided into teachers and sub-teachers by a dot. The dates mark the time of the commencement of the Mission, and the initials indicate the Society by which they are supported.

Western Africa.

				M.		H.	C.	T.		S.
		date.	pop.	F	N			F	N	
Gambia, Bathurst,	W. M. S.	1821	1867	1			25			
Sierra Leone, Freetown,	C. M. S.	1818	5643	2	2	270	12	1	6	512
	W. M. S.	1816		3			94			
Kissey, a town of lib- erated Africans,	C. M. S.		1246	1	1		40	2	2	105
Leicester, a hamlet near Gloucester,	do.	1823	124		1		4	1		13
Gloucester, a town of liberated Africans,	do.	1816	694				180		6	189
Regent, do.	do.	1816	1301			200	100	2	7	150
Leopold, do.	do.	1818	1083				14	1	2	354
Charlotte, do.	do.	1811	1006					2	3	146
Wellington, do.	do.	1829	1070				110	2	2	188
Waterloo, do.	do.	1820	1165	1			18	1	2	224
York, do.	do.	1822	560				37		1	103
Kent, a town of Africans,	do.	1819	754	1		130	10	3	12	231
Banana, (Islands,) do.	do.	1823	331	1				1		72
Plantains, do.	do.								1	29
Liberia,*	A. C. S.	1822	500	2		500				60

Explanation of the initials at the head of this table.—M. missionaries.—H. hearers C. communicants.—T. teachers.—S. scholars.—F foreign.—N native.

* This is a colony of Africo-Americans and liberated Africans, formed at cape Mesurado. It has but one station, which is at *Monrovia*, the town of the colony of the American Colonization Society.

South Africa.

This region had a population in 1820, of 105,336, and it contains the following divisions:

HOTTENTOTS, CAFFRES, GRIQUAS with BOJESMANS and CORANNAS, BOOTSUANNAS, and NAMAQUAE.

In the first of these, among the Hottentots, are the following Missionary establishments:

- 1812 Cape Town, capital of the colony. The London Missionary Society has one, and the Wesleyan Missionary Society 11 missionaries, at this place.
- 1808 Groenckloof, 45 miles north of Cape Town. The United Brethren have 4 Missionaries.
- Bosjesveld, 40 miles north of Cape Town. The United Brethren have 1 missionary.
- 1819 Paarl, 35 miles North East of Cape Town. The London Missionary Society has one missionary,—congregation large and has connected with it 8 out stations of about 150 hearers each.
- Tulbagh, 75 miles North East of Cape Town. One missionary of the London Missionary Society.
- Gnadenthal, 180 miles East by North from Cape Town. Established in 1736 renewed in 1792, by the United Brethren—7 missionaries.
- 1823 Hemel en Arde, a hospital for the relief of lepers. The United Brethren have one missionary.
- 1824 Elin, one day's ride S. E. of Gnadenthal, has two missionaries of the United Brethren.
- 1818 Pacaltsdorp, 245 miles E. of Cape Town. L. M. S. has one missionary.
- 1825 Hankey, a new station between Pacaltsdorp and Bethelsdorp. L. M. S. has one missionary.
- 1802 Bethelsdorp, 450 miles east of Cape Town, near Algoa Bay. L. M. S. has 3 missionaries and 1 school superintendent.
- 1818 Enon, near Algoa Bay, has 400 inhabitants; 246 are baptized, and there are 140 scholars. Here there are 4 missionaries of the U. B.
- 1814 Theopolis, in the district of Albany, 550 miles E. of Cape Town and 69 N. E. of Bethelsdorp. The L. M. S. has here 1 missionary, 1 superintendent and 1 schoolmaster.
- 1820 Albany, a district in the Eastern part of the colony; has two stations, Grahamstown and Salem, occupied by the Wesleyan M. S. Some others have lately been commenced.

CAFFRES.—The Caffres inhabit that division of Southern Africa, called Caffraria. It extends along the coast N. E. from the Keishamma river, nearly to the confines of Delagoa Bay, and is about 700 miles N. E. of Cape Town. The term Caffraria, has sometimes been applied to all that part of Southern Africa, not included in the colony of the Cape. In 1821 Dr. Thorn states, the term Caffre is very undefined, and we know as yet, but very little of the country or the population. The following missionary stations were established among them at the date preceding their names.

- 1817 Chumie. Two missionaries and one assistant, maintained by the colonial government, and the Glasgow Missionary Society. Little is known respecting this place.
- 1823 Wesleyville, a new station 12 miles from the mouth of the Kalumna. In this district there is 10 or 12,000 inhabitants.
- 1825 Mount Coke. At this and the last mentioned station, religion is said to have greatly prospered; they are both occupied by the W. M. S.
- 1826 Tzatzoe's Kraal, established by the L. M. S. There is one missionary and one native teacher.

GRIQUAS WITH BOJESMANS AND CORANNAS.—This district lies 700 miles N. E. of Cape Town, and has a population of 5,000. The London Missionary Society has here three stations, as follows:

- 1802 Griqua Town, 27 miles N. E. of Orange river. It has 2 missionaries, and in 1821, a church of 200 members.
- 1821 Campbell, 30 miles E. of Griqua Town. At this station at present there is a catechist.

Philipolis, on the North side of the Cradock river. At this place are great capabilities for a mission to the Bojesmans.

Bootsu this district there are two stations.

- 1817 New Lattakoo, N. E. of Cape Town 630 miles. The L. M. S. has here 2 missionaries and one artizan. The number that attend public worship is small. Dr. Philip, who visited this mission in 1825, remarks on the climate, that the scarcity of rain is a great barrier to improvement in this country; a shower to moisten the ground is a rare event.—The missionaries assured me that they had not for five years seen a drop of water running on the surface of the ground, and their sole dependence for corn and vegetables, is upon irrigation. It is seldom that a single cloud is seen: clouds and shade impart to a Bootsuanna a more lively idea of felicity than sunshine and fine weather does to an Englishman. In the Bootsuanna language, "Pulo," (rain,) is the only word which they have for a blessing, and showers of rain are 'showers of blessings.'
- 1823 Maquasse, a Bootsuanna town, a day's journey N. of the Yellow river. It is occupied by the Wesleyan M. S.

NAMAQUAS.—These people are a race of Hottentots, inhabiting the districts called Great and Little Namaqualand—630 miles N. of Capetown and 200 miles beyond the great Orange river. The L. M. S. has established among this people the following stations, viz:

Bethany in 1815, one missionary. Pella in 1814. Steinkoff in 1817.—Reed Fountain in 1824. The Namaquas at the last place keep up family worship morning and evening, read the scriptures diligently, and when the catechist is absent on the Sabbath at other stations, perform divine service themselves.

Lily Fountain, is a station occupied by the W. M. S. in 1817: considerable success has attended this mission.

African Islands.

Mauritius, or Isle of France—East of Madagascar—inhabitants 70,000—chiefly French colonists and blacks, but belongs to Great-Britain. The L. M. S. established a mission here in 1814. The congregation has of late fluctuated between 80 and 100. The number of scholars in the Sabbath school is 50. The day school is attended by 130 boys. Another mission was established in 1818, and renewed in 1820, at

Tananarivoo, the capital of the territory of King Radama in the Island of Madagascar. This Island is about 800 miles in length, and from 150 to 200 breadth, and contains about 4 millions of inhabitants. There are 3 missionaries, 4 artisans, and 1 printer. The schools are in active operation, and have been extended, to the number of 23, out of the capital.

Except in a few instances, the success of missionary exertions, at the different stations in South Africa, is mentioned only in general terms. The number, at each, who have professedly embraced christianity, is generally small, and very fluctuating. The little that has been done, however, considering the character of the inhabitants, is of great importance.

ASIA.

SURINAM.—The congregation of the United Brethren has been established here 50 years. A statement was made to the congregation, on the jubilee of the mission, shewing that during that period 2477, persons were baptized.—The congregation now consists of 1240 baptized persons. During the above period, 925, of those in union with the United Brethren, have died.

AMERICA.

LABRADOR.—The Esquimaux congregation at *Hopedale* has, in general, enjoyed peace and rest. The total number of inhabitants, is 188; of these, 66 are communicants. At *Okak*, religion is prospering. During the last winter, 7 adults and 15 children, were baptized; and 5 persons admitted to the Lord's table. The congregation consists of 350 members. At *Nain*, a religious festival was celebrated in commemoration of the commencement of the mission 50 years ago. The number of inhabitants, is 228; of whom, 72 are communicants, and 21 are candidates for baptism. At all these places, the children attend school and make gratifying progress. Some idea, of the severity of the climate, may be formed, when it is stated, that the bay at *Nain* was covered with ice from the end of Nov. to the end of June.

REVIVAL IN TROY.—A well written pamphlet, has been published by a number of the late church and congregation, under the care of Mr. Beman, giving a brief account of the origin and progress of the divisions in that church; and containing also, strictures upon the new doctrines broached, by the Rev. C. G. Finney, and N. S. S. Beman; with a summary relation of the trial of the latter, before the Troy Presbytery:—If the statements there made, be correct, respecting the sentiments expressed, and the course of conduct pursued, by the Rev. Messrs. Finney and Beman, in promoting the revival in that place, of which they have been the chief instruments; and if it has been half as destructive to the peace of religious society and to the prosperity and credit of religion, as there represented, then we say, the fewer of such revivals the better. A spirit, very different, we fear, from the spirit of God, has undoubtedly had a large share in it. The Editor of the *Philadelphia*, is displeased with the notice we gave of the Revival in Albany, because it did not accord with the testimony of his correspondents “both in and out of this city,” but which, nevertheless, is as true, as it is “marvellous” in his eyes; He moreover infers, that we would not reckon “*what is called a revival*” as among the subjects of thanksgiving. The truth of the inference is most freely conceded. A revival of religion, *worthy of the name*, we certainly do consider as a fit subject for thanksgiving. But in such scenes as have disgraced religion during the past year in the city of Troy, and which have been called a great revival, through the length and breadth of the land, we confess, we do not see any thing to afford ground of thanksgiving; unless it be, that in the good providence of God such razers of foundations, as Messrs. Beman and Finney have been restrained from doing all the injury to religion which their *doctrines and practices* are calculated to effect. But “God is in the midst of Zion, she shall not be moved:” this is ground of thanksgiving, indeed. We think it would astonish and utterly shock a person, not familiar with the arts of certain promoters of revivals, to read the blasphemous and horrid expressions made use of by these men who profess to be the ministers of religion; and whose ministry we have all along been told has been blessed to the conversion of so many souls! We recommend the pamphlet to our readers, as throwing much light on the popular subject of revivals. One thing, however, the truth of which cannot be questioned, we cannot omit to mention, as it shows how charges against ministers of the Presbyterian church for teaching the grossest errors, are disposed of by her courts. “During the late sitting of the Presbytery for the trial of Mr. Beman, his heterodoxy (see review of Beman on the atonement in our 2nd vol. particularly page 109) was suggested to them, as furnishing a suitable foundation for one of the charges, but was rejected by a committee chosen by that body to frame the accusations against him. The avowed reason of this omission, was, that it could constitute *no offence in the eyes of a majority of the Presbytery, who were unfortunately in the same dilemma, and who would thus in effect be judges of their own case.*” Is it then come to this, in the Presbyterian Church, that heresy cannot be the subject of discipline in her courts, because a majority of her ministers are heretics themselves? It would appear to be so; for the opinions of Mr. Beman have been published to the world for *three years*, and no notice has been taken of him, or them, by the courts of the church to which he belongs. Mr. Beman, however was put upon his trial on the ground of *common fame*, for certain allegations against him, the result of which is given in the pamphlet before us, in the following words:

“Notwithstanding the many flagrant offences which had been clearly elicited against Mr. Beman, his own unfair and jesuitical demeanour before the court by which he was tried, and the distracted state of the church and congregation, the presbytery acquitted him of all the charges, and resolved to afford him an opportunity of accomplishing still more mischief by prolonging his continuance here. And the Troy presbytery, to add insult to injustice, transgressed their authority by passing a vote of censure upon those members of the church who had signed the petition for the trial, and outraged common sense by a vote of thanks to Mr. Beman for his ministerial zeal and fidelity.”

View of Public Affairs.

For the greater part of our notice of Public Affairs for this month we are indebted to the Christian Advocate.

BRITAIN.—London papers to the 16th of April contain the most recent advices which we have seen from Britain. On the 1st of March Mr. Canning had so far recovered from his late severe indisposition, as to be able to bring the long-tacked-of subject of the corn laws before parliament. The debate was adjourned to the 8th of March, when it was again called up by the chancellor of the exchequer: an amendment was proposed to the proposition which contained the radical principle of his plan; and, after a warm debate it was negatived, and the proposition as reported was adopted. The whole bill was passed on the 12th of April. The chancellor of the exchequer had deferred opening his budget till after the Easter holidays. On the 5th and 6th of March, the subject of Catholic emancipation was ably and eloquently discussed in the house of commons, on a motion, in favour of emancipation, by Sir Francis Burdett. The motion was lost by a majority of only four.—For the motion 272, against it 176. Had it passed the commons, there is no doubt it would have been negatived in the house of lords. When information of the termination of this business in Parliament reached Ireland, it produced what the English paragraphists call *a great sensation*, but no public disturbances ensued. Lord Liverpool was in a state of convalescence, but it was thought probable that he would never again appear in public life. Mr. Canning has been appointed prime minister in the place of Lord Liverpool, in consequence of which seven ministers of the cabinet, it would appear in dudgeon, have resigned, viz: The Lord Chancellor Eldon, the duke of Wellington, Lord Sidmouth, Lord Bathurst, Lord Westmoreland, Lord Bexley, (formerly Nicholas Vansittart,) and Mr. Peel. Mr. Canning in all probability will have the forming of his own cabinet, and as he is favourable to the Catholic emancipation, a new attempt for this object may be expected. The appointment of Mr. C. is very popular throughout the country, while the conduct of the ex-ministers is strongly reprobated. It appears that from the 3d to the 8th of March, there had been a most unusual fall of snow in Scotland. Many lives were lost, and travelling for several days was almost entirely stopped. The drifts or wreaths of snow were, in some places, twenty feet deep.

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.—It does not seem probable that *open* war will soon take place between these powers. We believe the civil war in Portugal is nearly, if not quite terminated. As to Spain, we pretend not even to conjecture what she will do next.

COLOMBIA.—The political affairs of this extensive republic appear, from the last accounts, to be in a very unsettled and unpropitious state. It is again confidently stated, that Bolivar is aiming at the Dictatorship; and he and General Santander are said to be in open and avowed hostility with each other.

MEXICO.—In this republic also, civil dissensions have arisen. In one place a regiment of soldiers has revolted, opened prisons—armed the prisoners—arrested the governor, and created a junta of their own.

UNITED STATES.—When we consider, in contrast with what we have stated above, the present peaceful and happy state of our own country—when we review its history from the period of its revolution to the present hour, we may see that to preserve order in a revolution, and to settle those who have been engaged in it in peace and quietness under free forms of government, is much easier when freedom has been their birthright and long possession, than when the elements of a revolution that are to be moulded into republicans, have been born in bondage, and have passed a great part of their lives under the most despotic rule. Let us bless God for our happy allotment, and let us sympathize with, and pray for those, who must be taught the nature and proper use of their civil rights and privileges, by a tedious discipline in the school of adversity—of controversy and discord, perhaps of bloodshed and civil war.

